

And Then There Was Light!

According to EnergyStar (www.energystar.gov), if every American home replaced just one light bulb with an ENERGY STAR qualified bulb, we would save enough energy to light more than 3 million homes for a year, more than \$600 million in annual energy costs, and prevent greenhouse gases equivalent to the emissions of more than 800,000 cars.

For decades, greenhouse gases (carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide, nitrous oxide, and mercury) from power plants that produce electricity, much of which is used for lighting, has been raining down on much of the U.S. Replacing incandescent bulbs with energy efficient compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) would dramatically reduce energy consumption and the volume of greenhouse gas emissions released into the atmosphere.

1. Compact fluorescent bulbs use 1/4 the energy required by an incandescent bulb to produce the same level of light. They produce approximately 75 % less heat making them safer to operate and reducing the energy costs associated with home cooling.
2. CFLs on average last 8000 hours, more than 10 times the life of an incandescent bulb. The cost savings of a single CFL can approach \$100 over the life of the bulb.
3. A single CFL may prevent emission of approximately 450 pounds of green house gases in its lifetime.
4. CFL energy efficiency purchase rebates are widely available.
5. Australia has announced plans to ban incandescent light bulbs. So has the EU. California has proposed legislation to similar effect.

Tips:

- i. Use reflector CFLs in recessed light fixtures. When replacing incandescent floods greater than 75 watts, use CFLs rated at 800 lumens or more.
- ii. CFLs provide the greatest savings in fixtures that are on for at least 15 minutes at a time or several hours per day.

The days of fluorescent lights with a hum, an irritating flicker, or casting an unattractive purple-white light, are long gone. Warm white compact fluorescent lights are common. Today, your hardware store, supermarket and mega-retailer such as Costco and Wal-Mart carry a wide variety of fluorescent bulbs which fit almost every size, shape and variety of light fixture and applications such as floods, dimmers, 3-way and outdoor lighting.